

## Message Text

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71

ACTION SIL-01

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11

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FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6242

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

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AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

USMISSION GENEVA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, ILO

SUBJ: EAST-WEST TRADE UNION MEETING AT THE ILO

REF: EC BRUSSELS 6951

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. ACCORDING TO JEAN KULAKOWSKI, THE EUROPEAN ORGANIZATION OF THE WORKD CONFEDERATION OF LABOR (EO/WCL) HAS BEEN INVITED TO ATTEND THE JANUARY 19 EAST-WEST TRADE UNION CONFERENCE AT GENEVA. HE SAID THE WCL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE WILL MEET JANUARY 13 TO DISCUSS THE INVITATION AND THAT EO/WCL PARTICIPATION IS PRACTICALLY CERTAIN. THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ETUC) WILL NOT ATTEND.

END SUMMARY.

2. ON JANUARY 9, JEAN KULAKOWSKI, GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE WCL'S EUROPEAN ORGANIZATION, TOLD THE MISSION LABOR ATTACHE THAT THE EO/WCL WILL UNDOUBTEDLY ACCEPT THE INVITATION IT HAS RECEIVED TO ATTEND THE EAST-WEST MEETING IN GENEVA DURING THE ILO EUROPEAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE. KULAKOWSKI DESCRIBED THE EAST-WEST MEETING AS AN INEVITABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THIS AGE OF DETENTE BUT SAID IT WOULD BE NAIVE TO EXPECT THAT THE MEETING WILL PRODUCE ANYTHING MORE THAN AN AGREEMENT TO MEET AGAIN AT SOME FUTURE DATE, PERHAPS IN BONN. NEVERTHELESS, HE LAMENTED THE LACK OF PREPARATION FOR THE MEETING ON THE PART OF WEST EUROPEAN TRADE UNIONS WHICH HE ATTRIBUTES TO THE UNWILLINGNESS OF ICFTU AFFILIATED UNIONS, PARTICULARLY THE BRITISH TUC, TO DEVELOP A COMMON APPROACH AND STRATEGY WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ETUC).

3. ETUC GENERAL SECRETARY THEO RASSCHAERT TOLD US THAT HE WILL ATTEND THE ILO EUROPEAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE BUT WILL NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE EAST-WEST MEETING. RASSCHAERT DESCRIBED THE EAST-WEST MEETING AS "A SPLENDID MESS". HE WAS CONSIDERABLY MORE EMPHATIC THAN KULAKOWSKI IN DEPLORING THE LACK OF PREPARATION BY WEST EUROPEAN UNIONS FOR THE MEETING. RASSCHAERT SAID HE IS NOT OPPOSED TO INFORMAL CONTACTS WITH THE EAST BUT IS DISTURBED BY THE HAPHAZARD WESTERN APPROACH TO AN ORGANIZED CONFERENCE ORCHESTRATED BY THE RUSSIANS.

4. COMMENT. RASSCHAERT'S POSITION ON EAST-WEST CONTACTS HAS BEEN CONSISTENT OVER A LONG PERIOD BUT HIS DENUNCIATION OF THE JANUARY 19 MEETING WAS PARTICULARLY STRONG. THIS CAN PROBABLY BE ATTRIBUTED TO THE ETUC AND ICFTU EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISIONS LAST NOVEMBER (SEE REFTTEL) WHICH EFFECTIVELY DENIED THE SECRETARIATS OF BOTH ORGANIZATIONS AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EAST-WEST MEETING. LEADERS OF THE EO/WCL AND THE WCL ON THE OTHER HAND HAVE BEEN PURSUING A POLICY SINCE 1971 WHICH ADVOCATES INCREASED RELATIONS WITH EAST BLOC LABOR ORGANIZATIONS AND THEREFORE VIEW THE EAST-WEST MEETING FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE. MYERSON

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## Message Attributes

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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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